

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PANAMA 03999 061844Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
SAB-02 /070 W
-----086697 070458Z /12

R 061837Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7374
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
PANCANAL
USSOUTHCOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 03999

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, OVIP(CARTER, JIMMY), PN, CO, CS, VE
SUBJECT: OPPOSITION SEEKS AUDIENCE WITH CARTER

REF: CARACAS 4885

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN ADVISED THAT PANAMANIAN LIBERAL PARTY PRESIDENT DAVID SAMUDIO, SR., WAS THE ONE WHO PROVIDED PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ THE REPORT AND ANALYSIS OF PANAMA'S POLITICAL SITUATION, REPORTED REFTEL. ACCORDING TO A VERY GOOD SOURCE IN THE LIBERAL PARTY PEREZ (HAVING DISCUSSED PANAMA WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN CARACAS) INVITED SAMUDIO TO CARACAS TO CONFER ON PANAMANIAN POLITICS AND TO PRESENT THE OPPOSITION'S CASE. PEREZ SUBSEQUENTLY TELEPHONED TORRIJOS TO URGE HIM TO EFFECT REFORMS IN PANAMA'S POLITICAL SYSTEM AND WILL BROACH THE SUBJECT WITH TORRIJOS AGAIN WHEN HE COMES HERE FOR THE JUNE 16-17 EXCHANGE OF PANAMA CANAL TREATY RATIFICATIONS.

2. OUR SOURCE EXPLAINED THAT LIBERAL PARTY REPRESENTATIVES WILL ALSO PRESENT THEIR CASE TO THE PRESIDENTS OF COLOMBIA
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PANAMA 03999 061844Z

AND COSTA RICA, URGING THEM TO PRESSURE TORRIJOS TO DEMOCRATIZE THE SYSTEM, WHILE HERE JUNE 16-17. HE SAID THIS IS PART OF AN EFFORT TO CALL INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TO PANAMA'S SITUATION. IN THE LIBERAL PARTY'S VIEW (AND THE VIEW OF OTHER OPPOSITIONISTS), PANAMA IS IN DIRE NEED OF REFORM NOT ONLY FOR ITS POLITICAL WELL-BEING BUT ALSO SO THAT THE COUNTRY WILL BE CAPABLE OF LIVING UP TO ITS

COMMITMENTS UNDER THE NEW CANAL TREATIES.

3. THE LIBERAL PARTY HAS ASKED THE EMBASSY TO INCLUDE ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S SCHEDULE HERE A MEETING WITH OPPOSITION PARTY LEADERS IN ORDER TO GAIN CARTER'S SUPPORT AS WELL. EMBOFF ADVISED THE PARTY THAT THIS WAS ALMOST CERTAINLY IMPOSSIBLE.

4. COMMENT: THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN PANAMA HAVE BEEN CRYING FOR REFORM FOR A LONG TIME. STRICTLY SPEAKING, THE PARTIES ARE ILLEGAL, HAVING BEEN OUTLAWED WHEN THE TORRIJOS REGIME CAME INTO POWER TEN YEARS AGO. IN THE LAST NINE MONTHS, THE LIBERAL AND OTHER PARTIES HAVE HAD PRETTY MUCH OF A FREE REIN TO ORGANIZE AND CARRY OUT POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. NEVERTHELESS, THE REFORMS THEY PROPOSE HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF VIRTUE: BASIC TO THEIR PLAN IS CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, WHICH WOULD PROVIDE FOR DIRECT ELECTION OF PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT, SEPARATION OF POWERS, AND THE LEGALIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES. WHILE THE PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENT HAS MADE SOME STEPS TOWARD LIBERALIZATION IN RECENT MONTHS, THERE IS STILL A WAYS TO GO TOWARD DEMOCRATIZATION OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM. WHAT EFFECT A CONCERTED INTERNATIONAL EFFORT MIGHT HAVE ON TORRIJOS AND HIS ATTITUDE TO POLITICAL REFORM IS UNCERTAIN.

5. FOR BOGOTA AND SAN JOSE: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE BEING ADVISED OF ANY STRAWS IN THE WIND AS TO LIBERAL PARTY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PANAMA 03999 061844Z

APPROACHES TO PRESIDENTS OF COLOMBIA AND COSTA RICA. WE DO KNOW THAT A LIBERAL PARTY DELEGATION WAS IN BOGOTA WITHIN THE LAST TWO OR THREE WEEKS, MEETING WITH COLOMBIAN LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS. JORDEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OPPOSITION PARTIES, DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIONS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PANAMA03999
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780237-0340
Format: TEL
From: PANAMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780691/aaaadasf.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d8086e91-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CARACAS 4885
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2476526
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPPOSITION SEEKS AUDIENCE WITH CARTER
TAGS: PINT, OVIP, PN, CO, CS, VE, US, (CARTER, JIMMY)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d8086e91-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014